

To: Honolulu City Council  
The Honorable Ron Menor, Chair

C & S - HONOLULU  
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From: Lorraine Minatoishi  
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City Council Meeting: Wednesday, July 12, 2017 10am  
City Council Chamber, Honolulu Hale

**RE: Council Bill 52 CD1 (2017) Minimum Real Property Tax**

I am writing in opposition to CB52 CD1 (2017) Related to the Minimum Real Property Tax. The bill proposes to change the property tax exemption provided to historic residential properties by raising the annual minimum property tax for historic residences dedicated to preservation to \$1000 per year. The minimum property tax for other exemption categories would remain at the current level of \$300 annually. If CB 52 CD 1 is approved, only historic residential properties and credit unions would be subject to the higher annual minimum tax rate; the other more than 20 categories of exemptions that qualify under their programs would pay the lower rate.

Historic Homes in Hawaii are becoming increasingly more valuable due to the mass amount of development and rebuilding occurring on the island. Reduced property tax encourages individuals to nominate their property to the historic register, which assists in the continued preservation of these structures.

Lower property tax helps preserve historic homes by saving the property owner money and by providing an incentive to save the historic fabric that makes up the built environment of Hawaii. It is known that historic homes require more maintenance and care in comparison to newly built homes as the materials and systems are dated and usually require specialized professional consultation. The tax break allows homeowners to conduct the necessary maintenance and care of these valuable historic houses.

Increasing property tax would affect preservation by lowering the number of individuals willing to go through the process of putting their property on the historic register thus increasing the risk of losing valuable pieces of Hawaii's architectural history.

Therefore, I urge City Council to oppose CB 52 CD1 and leave the minimum property tax for historic homes unchanged. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



Lorraine Minatoishi, PhD., AIA